

H.B. 19-1023

HELPING COLORADO FOSTER YOUTH OBTAIN BASIC  
IDENTIFICATION, INSTRUCTION PERMITS,  
DRIVER'S LICENSE AND INSURANCE

---

SPONSORS: Representatives SAINÉ, JACKSON, McLachlan and Roberts;  
Senators MARBLE, TODD and Zenzinger

---

H.B. 19-1023 is a modest effort to help Colorado foster youth obtain basic identification, instruction permits, driver's licenses and insurance.

As illustrated by an investigative series published last summer in The Denver Post, lack of access to transportation, particularly driving, is a leading indicator of homelessness within one year of aging out of the system. Few foster youth are able to learn to drive while in foster care.

This Bill is supported by a growing coalition which includes the Colorado Motor Carriers Association, the Colorado-Wyoming Petroleum Marketers, Adoption Search Resource Connection, the Office of the Child's Representative and the Tennyson Center for Children.

DHS currently estimates that the population of youth 16 and older that have been in foster care for a year or more is 492 individuals.

The Bill includes the following proposals:

1. Clarifies that foster youth 16 years or older may obtain insurance. The provisions of the Bill will allow, for example, a charity that wants to fund the cost of insurance in the future may do so. Some foster youth may be able to get a job and pay for insurance on their own.
2. Changes the term "foster parent" to "foster care" to reflect the fact that the majority of foster youth 16 years and older are in group homes or residential care facilities.
3. Authorizes counties to create a driver's instruction and license program for youth 17 and up, expanding from the current statute which is pegged at 17½ .
4. Authorizes counties to solicit gifts, grants and donations. Some states, like the State of Washington, have a robust charity for these programs called Treehouse.
5. With the help of DMV we have attempted to streamline the process for obtaining a Colorado ID, instruction permit and driver's license.

6. The insurance pool proposal which drove the fiscal note has been stricken.
7. Not all of the barriers to transportation can be dealt with in this Bill. We have more research to do. Right now, Arizona, Florida, Missouri and Washington have created foster youth programs. We need to learn from them. To move this ball forward we have included a directive that the Transportation Legislative Review Committee in the next interim further examine the barriers, consulting with the counties, subject matter experts, the Office of the Child's Representative and other state agencies as needed.

Greg Fulton, President, Colorado Motor Carriers Association, Phone: 303-477-6977; Grier Bailey, Manager Government Affairs, Petroleum Marketers Association, Phone: 303-902-0132; Ashley Chase, Staff Attorney-Legislative Liaison, Office of the Child's Representative, Phone: 303-860-1517; Shayne Madsen, Volunteer Lobbyist, Adoption Search Resource Connection, Phone: 303-588-1693; Ned Breslin, President-Chief Executive Officer, Tennyson Center, Phone: 720-855-3345.